

Speaker McCarthy is running out of options to stop a shutdown as conservatives balk at a new plan

By STEPHEN GROVES and
LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Speaker Kevin McCarthy is running out of options as he races Monday to come up with a plan to keep the federal government from shutting down as even a proposal to include hard-line border security provisions wasn't enough to appease the far-right flank in his Republican House majority. The speaker told his Republican conference that they should be prepared to stay through this weekend to pass a stop-gap measure, called a continuing resolution, that would keep government offices open past the Sept. 30 deadline. But many are already bracing for the heavy political fallout of a federal shutdown. "I've told all of Congress you're not going to go home. We're going to continue to work through this," McCarthy said Monday at the Capitol. "Things that are tough sometimes are worth it."

Continued on Page 2



Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., stops for reporters' questions about passing a funding bill and avoiding a government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington, Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

Associated Press
Page 2



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Speaker McCarthy is running out of options to stop a shutdown as conservatives balk at a new plan

Continued from Front

He also suggested that time is still on his side and panned the idea of compromising with Democrats as he tries to pass the annual spending measures on his own, saying there were "a lot of good ideas" still coming from Republicans. "This isn't the 30th — we've got a long ways to go," he said.

The speaker on a Sunday night call with House Republicans pitched a Thursday vote on passing a one-month funding bill that was negotiated between the hard-right House Freedom Caucus and a group of pragmatic-minded conservatives known as the Main Street Caucus, according to those with knowledge of the call.

McCarthy called the package a "bottom-up" approach, and it was intended to win support from the conservative wing of the Republican Conference by including a 1% cut to last year's spending levels as well as a slew of Republican proposals for border security and immigration. In order to protect Republican spending priorities for defense, veteran and disaster relief, it cuts other spending by over 8%.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer in a floor speech said, "Last night's



Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., talks to reporters about avoiding a government shutdown and launching an impeachment inquiry into President Joe Biden, following a closed-door meeting with fellow Republicans at the Capitol in Washington, Sept. 14, 2023.

Associated Press

proposal in the house can be boiled down to two words: Slapdash, reckless." "Slapdash, because it's not a serious proposal for avoiding a shutdown, and reckless because if passed would cause immense harm to so many priorities that help the American people," he said.

With the Senate controlled by Democrats who will not accept any of the conservative options, the best hope McCarthy has at this point is to simply pass a measure to kickstart debate with the other chamber.

But even that route is uncertain with time dwindling to strike a deal.

McCarthy planned to hold a vote on a Department of Defense spending bill on

Wednesday, then the stop-gap funding measure the next day.

"There's quite a few people that are against it right now," said Rep. Kevin Hern, R-Okla., leader of the Republican Study Committee, the largest conservative faction in the House, adding that he was still considering the proposal and that a lot of work was happening "behind the scenes" to get the votes to pass it.

Leaders of the so-called "five families" — the various conservative factions that make up the House Republican majority — are expected to convene later Monday behind closed doors in the speaker's office.

It's crucial that they find an agreed-upon path forward

for McCarthy, who is starting down just eight working days in session before funding runs out.

"This framework secures the border and it keeps the government open. Republicans need to focus on those things," said Rep. Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., who is chair of the Mainstreet Caucus and helped craft the proposal.

Time is running short for Congress to act. Though McCarthy still contends he has time to maneuver before the government's fiscal year ends, he has also tried to warn his party that a government shutdown is likely to backfire on Republicans politically.

"I've been through shutdowns and I've never seen somebody win a shutdown because when you shut down, you give all your power to the administration," McCarthy said in a Fox News interview on Sunday.

"How are you going to win your arguments to secure the border if the border agents don't get paid? How are you going to win the arguments to get wokeism out of the Department of Defense? If even our own troops aren't being paid. You have no strength there."

But McCarthy is already facing resistance. A handful of Republicans took to

X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, shortly after the Sunday call to criticize even the package with spending cuts and border measures as woefully insufficient.

One of the Freedom Caucus lawmakers who helped craft the proposal, Rep. Byron Donalds, R-Fla., said in a statement that as he answered phone calls coming into his office Monday, he heard frustration from people who "feel lied to and sold down the river by Washington politicians."

"What House Republicans are attempting to achieve is straightforward: Much needed border security and real budget cuts," he said.

Many are readying for a government closure next month. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce issued a memo Monday to the business community saying there is a "substantial consensus" that there will be a long shutdown and warning that there is "no clear path for reopening the government."

"Individuals and businesses rely on the discretionary functions of government on a daily basis," the Chamber wrote.

"From passports and permits to clinical trials and contractors, a well-functioning economy requires a functioning government." □



A Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II performs a demonstration flight at the Paris Air Show, in Le Bourget, east of Paris, Tuesday, June 20, 2017.

Associated Press

Military searches near South Carolina lakes for fighter jet whose pilot safely ejected

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Authorities searched near two South Carolina lakes on Monday for a military jet that apparently crashed after the pilot safely ejected over the weekend.

The pilot, whose name hasn't been released, parachuted to safety into a North Charleston neighborhood at around 2 p.m. Sunday.

He was taken to a hospital, where he was in stable condition, Marines Maj. Melanie Salinas said Sunday.

Cpl. Christian Cortez, a Marine with the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, said there was a mishap involving an F-35B Lightning II jet and that the search was ongoing Monday. Exactly what happened was under investigation, he said.

Based on the missing plane's location and trajectory, the search was focused on Lake Moultrie and Lake Marion, said Senior Master Sgt. Heather Stanton at Joint Base Charleston. Both lakes are north of North Charleston.

A South Carolina Law Enforcement Division helicopter joined the search after some bad weather cleared in the area, Stanton said. Military officials appealed in online posts Sunday for any help from the public in locating the aircraft.

The pilot of a second F-35 returned safely to Joint Base Charleston, Salinas said.

The planes and pilots were with the Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 with the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing based in Beaufort, near the South Carolina coast. □

Hunter Biden sues the IRS over tax disclosures after agent testimony before Congress

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Hunter Biden sued the Internal Revenue Service on Monday, claiming that two agents publicly alleging tax-probe interference wrongly shared his personal information, a case that comes amid escalating legal and political struggles as the 2024 election looms. The agents "targeted and sought to embarrass Mr. Biden" with the sharing of confidential tax information in press interviews and testimony before Congress, the suit said. His lawyers argue that whistleblower protections don't apply, but a lawyer for one agent said any confidential information released came under whistleblower authorization and called the suit a "frivolous smear."

The lawsuit marks the latest legal pushback from Biden as a long-running federal investigation into him unfolds against a sharply political backdrop. That includes an impeachment inquiry aimed at his father, President Joe Biden, seeking to tie him to his son's business



President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden leaves after a court appearance, July 26, 2023, in Wilmington, Del.

Associated Press

dealings. "Mr. Biden is the son of the President of the United States. He has all the same responsibilities as any other American citizen, and the IRS can and should make certain that he abides by those responsibilities," the suit states. "Similarly, Mr. Biden has no fewer or lesser rights than any other American citizen, and

no government agency or government agent" has free rein to violate his rights simply because of who he is. The suit says the IRS hasn't done enough to halt the airing of his personal information. It seeks to "force compliance with federal tax and privacy laws" and damages of \$1,000 for every unauthorized disclo-

sure. IRS supervisory special agent Greg Shapley, and a second agent, Joe Ziegler, have claimed there was a pattern of "slow-walking investigative steps" into Hunter Biden in testimony before Congress. They alleged that the prosecutor overseeing the investigation, Delaware U.S. Attorney David Weiss, didn't have full authority to

bring charges in other jurisdictions. Weiss and the Justice Department have denied that. Shapley's lawyer called the lawsuit a "frivolous smear" that sought to "intimidate any current and future whistleblowers." He didn't release confidential tax information except through legal whistleblower disclosures, his attorney said. "Once Congress released that testimony, like every American citizen, he has a right to discuss that public information."

Ziegler's lawyer said he will "continue to speak out" about what he considers "special treatment" for Hunter Biden in the handling of the case. The GOP-controlled House Oversight Committee called the two men "good people who did everything right to obtain whistleblower protection with the best interest of our country in mind," in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter. The agents testified before the committee in July, and said their "investigation will continue." The IRS declined to comment, citing the pending litigation. □

Utah private prison company returns \$5M to Mississippi after understaffing is found at facility

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — A Utah-based private prison company has returned \$5.1 million to the Mississippi Department of Corrections af-

ter an investigation found it failed to provide enough workers at one of the prisons it was operating, state Auditor Shad White said

Monday. Management & Training Corporation sent the money to the department last week, he said. "Every penny must be accounted for," White said in a news release.

MTC had operated the Marshall County Correctional Facility in Holly Springs since August 2012 until the state took control of it in September 2021, according to the Department of Corrections.

The auditor's office started investigating MTC based in Centerville, Utah in 2021 when allegations arose that the company was not providing the correct amount of prison staff required under a contract with the state. The auditor's office

ultimately found MTC failed to provide enough workers to ensure the safety of inmates and prison employees, but the company was still paid by the state as if it had.

In November 2022, White issued a \$1.9 million demand to MTC, saying the company had nearly 12,000 unfilled mandatory shifts between 2017 and 2020 at the prison in Marshall County. White said MTC failed to tell the state's Department of Corrections that prison staffing had fallen below minimum levels required by the contract.

MTC communications director Dave Martinson said in November that the company paid vacancy

penalties under the terms of the Marshall County Correctional Facility contract, which was amended by the state in December 2017. Martinson said the penalties were deducted from the company's monthly invoices to the department. The Associated Press emailed questions to MTC on Monday about why the company returned more money than the state auditor demanded. The company's current communications director, Emily Lawhead, said in a statement that MTC has worked closely with the Mississippi Department of Corrections for the past decade "and has had an open and transparent partnership." □



Mississippi Auditor Shad White speaks at the Neshoba County Fair in Philadelphia, Miss., July 28, 2022.

Associated Press

Hawaii officials say DNA tests drop Maui fire death count to 97

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLER and REBECCA BOONE
Associated Press

WAILUKU, Hawaii (AP) — Authorities in Hawaii have adjusted the number of deaths from the deadly Maui wildfire down to at least 97 people.

Officials previously said they believed at least 115 people had died in the fire, but further testing showed they had multiple DNA samples from some of the victims. The number of those who are missing also fell from 41 to 31, Maui Police Chief John Pelletier said.

John Byrd, laboratory director with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, said during a news conference Friday afternoon that the current number of dead should be considered a minimum, because it's possible that toll could rise.

Determining the death toll from the Aug. 8 wildfire in Lahaina has been especially complicated because of the damage caused by the fire and the chaos as people tried to escape, officials said. In some cases, animal remains were inadvertently collected along



Defense POW/MIA Account Agency Laboratory Director John Byrd, left, Maui County Physician's Coroner Dr. Jeremy Stuelpnagel, center, and Maui Police Chief John Pelletier talk about a drop in the estimated number of deaths from a deadly August wildfire during a press conference in Wailuku, Hawaii, on Friday Sept. 15, 2023.

Associated Press

with human remains.

So far, 74 of the deceased have been positively identified, Pelletier said.

The Lahaina fire is the deadliest wildfire in the U.S. in more than a century. Caught in a hellscape, some residents died in their cars, while others jumped into the ocean or tried to

run for safety. The blaze reduced much of the historic town to ash.

"When the fire broke out, people ran together, they huddled together," said Dr. Jeremy Stuelpnagel, Maui County physician's coroner. "They're holding each other in those moments. Some of them were even

holding pets." Because of this, some remains arrived commingled.

Byrd said the initial death tally was too high for several reasons, adding that the lower tally now was the "normal and natural" progression of the long-term forensics investigation.

"We look at body bags that

come in and we do an initial inventory and we assess how many people are represented there," he said. "When you do the first tally of all those that have come in, the number tends to be too high because as you begin to do more analysis and examination you realize that actually you've got two bags that were the same person or you have two bags that were the same two people but you didn't realize that."

"The numbers start a little too high on the morgue side and eventually settles until at some point it's going to be a final accurate number. I would say we're not quite there yet," Byrd said.

Only people who have had a missing person report filed for them with the Maui Police Department are on the verified missing list, Pelletier said. If a missing person report hasn't been filed for someone more than five weeks after the fire, then that person probably isn't actually missing, the chief said.

Stuelpnagel wasn't supposed to start in his new role until October. □

'El Chapo' son Ovidio Guzmán López pleads not guilty to U.S. charges

By MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Ovidio Guzmán López, a son of former Sinaloa cartel leader Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzmán, pleaded not guilty Monday to drug trafficking, money laundering and other charges during his first court appearance since being extradited to the U.S. from Mexico.

Guzmán López was extradited Friday, five months after U.S. prosecutors unsealed sprawling indictments against him and his brothers, known collectively as the "Chapitos." The indictments laid out how following their father's extradition and eventual life

sentence in the U.S. in 2019, the brothers steered the cartel increasingly into synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine and the powerful opioid fentanyl. During the 15-minute arraignment, Guzmán López pleaded not guilty through a translator, standing before a judge in an orange jumpsuit and matching orange slippers, with his legs shackled at the ankles. He hunched forward as he listened to prosecutors and Judge Sharon Johnson Coleman.

A larger than usual contingent of seven security staff stood in the courtroom, with one facing the court benches and watching visi-

tors. Mexican security forces captured Guzmán López, known as "the Mouse," in January in Culiacan, capital of Sinaloa state, the cartel's namesake. His arrest set off violence that left 30 people dead, including 10 military personnel. Mexico's army used Black Hawk helicopter gunships against the cartel's truck-mounted .50-caliber machine guns. Cartel gunmen hit two military aircraft, forcing them to land, and sent gunmen to the city's airport, where military and civilian aircraft were hit by gunfire.

Three years earlier, the government tried to capture him, but aborted the operation after similar violence.

The U.S. indictments against the brothers that were unsealed in April said their goal was to produce huge

quantities of fentanyl and sell it at the lowest price. The brothers denied the allegations in a letter. □



This frame grab from video, provided by the Mexican government, shows Ovidio Guzman Lopez being detained in Culiacan, Mexico, Oct. 17, 2019.

Associated Press

UN experts say Ethiopia's conflict and Tigray fighting left over 10,000 survivors of sexual violence

By JAMEY KEATEN

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — U.N.-backed human rights experts say war crimes continue in Ethiopia despite a peace accord signed nearly a year ago to end a conflict that engulfed the country's northern Tigray region. The violence has left at least 10,000 people affected by rape and other sexual violence mostly women and girls, they found.

They warned of "hallmark risks" that the violence could spread further, producing more "atrocities crimes" and jeopardize security more broadly in East Africa. With a multi-ethnic population of about 120 million, Ethiopia is by far the most populous country in the region.

The experts' report, published on Monday, comes against the backdrop of an uncertain future for the team of investigators who wrote it: The U.N. Human Rights Council is set to decide early next month whether to extend the team's mandate in the face of efforts by the Ethio-



A Tigrayan refugee rape victim who fled the conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray sits for a portrait in eastern Sudan near the Sudan-Ethiopia border, March 20, 2021.

Associated Press

pian government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to end it.

The violence erupted in November 2020, centering largely though not exclusively on the northern Tigray region, which for months was shut off from the outside world. The report cites atrocities by all sides in the war, including mass kill-

ings, rape, starvation and destruction of schools and medical facilities.

Mohamed Chande Othman, chairman of the international commission of human rights experts on Ethiopia, said the situation remains "extremely grave" despite a peace accord signed in November.

"While the signing of the

agreement may have mostly silenced the guns, it has not resolved the conflict in the north of the country, in particular in Tigray, nor has it brought about any comprehensive peace," he said.

"Violent confrontations are now at a near-national scale, with alarming reports of violations against civil-

ians in the Amhara region and on-going atrocities in Tigray," Othman added.

Speaking to reporters in Geneva, he said patterns of grave rights violations and growing "securitization" in Ethiopia "bear hallmark risks of further atrocity crimes."

The report said troops from neighboring Eritrea which the commission said were the worst offenders and militia members from Ethiopia's Amhara militia continue to commit grave violations in Tigray, including the "systematic rape and sexual violence of women and girls."

Commissioner Radhika Coomaraswamy said the presence of Eritrean troops in Ethiopia showed not only "an entrenched policy of impunity, but also continued support for and tolerance of such violations by the federal government."

"Entire families have been killed, relatives forced to watch horrific crimes against their loved ones, while whole communities have been displaced or expelled from their homes," she said. □

Human rights in Russia have 'significantly' worsened since Ukraine war began, UN-backed expert says

GENEVA (AP) — The rights situation in Russia has "significantly deteriorated" since President Vladimir Putin launched his war against Ukraine in February last year, an expert commissioned by the U.N.'s top human rights body said in her first report on the country on Monday.

Mariana Katzarova, the special rapporteur on Russia's rights situation mandated by the Human Rights Council, chronicled the domestic crackdown that has largely targeted critics of Putin's war as well as other opposition voices in Russia. Her report, made public on Monday, is separate from another probe by U.N.-backed investigators that has accused Russia of war

crimes in Ukraine.

Never before has the council authorized a rights expert to examine rights issues

in one of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States.

ed States.

The report cited figures last month from OVD-Info, which tracks human rights violations, indicating that more than 20,000 people were detained between February last year and June for participating in anti-war protests. More than 600 criminal lawsuits were initiated against "anti-war activity," it said.

The report said over half of all protesters who were arrested for what it called "peaceful anti-war activism" were women.

Katzarova said she had received "credible reports" of a litany of rights violations including torture, allegations of rape and sexual violence, and threats of sexual abuse by law en-

forcement officers against both men and women. None of those cases had been officially investigated, she said.

The Russian Justice Ministry's registry of "foreign agents" contained 649 organizations and individuals by the end of July an increase of more than 25% in six months, the report said. More than 100 organizations were declared as "undesirable" at the end of July, meaning they could be banned.

Last April, barely six weeks after Russia's armed invasion of Ukraine, the U.N. General Assembly suspended Russia's seat in the 47-member-country rights council in Geneva. □



A completed resolution vote tally to affirm the suspension of the Russian Federation from the United Nations Human Rights Council is displayed during a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Thursday, April 7, 2022, at THE United Nations headquarters.

Associated Press

Italy approves new migrant detention as talk turns to naval blockade

By N. WINFIELD, L. COOK
and A. CHARLTON
Associated Press

ROME (AP) — The Italian government approved new measures to crack down on migration Monday, after the southern island of Lampedusa was again overwhelmed by a wave of arrivals setting off from Tunisia and the migration issue returned to center stage in Europe with talk of a naval blockade.

The measures approved by the Cabinet focused on migrants who don't qualify for asylum and are slated to be repatriated to their home countries. The government extended the amount of time such people can be detained to the EU maximum of 18 months. It also plans to increase the number of detention centers to hold them, since capacity has always been insufficient and many of those scheduled to be returned home manage to head farther north.

Premier Giorgia Meloni announced the "extraordinary measures" after Lampedusa, which is closer to Tunisia in North Africa than the Italian mainland, was overwhelmed last week by nearly 7,000 migrants in a day, more than the island's resident population. Italy has been



Boats which were used to carry migrants are accumulated in the port of the Sicilian island of Lampedusa, southern Italy, Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

Associated Press

offloading them slowly by ferry to Sicily and other ports, but the arrivals once again stoked tensions on the island and in political corridors, especially ahead of European Parliament elections next year.

Amid the domestic and EU political jockeying, Meloni resurrected campaign calls for a naval blockade of North Africa to prevent human traffickers from launching their smuggling boats into the Mediterranean. Meloni was on hand in Tunis in June when the

European Commission president signed an accord with the Tunisian government pledging economic aid in exchange for help preventing departures.

A similar accord was signed years ago with Libya but human rights groups have blasted it as a violation of international maritime law, insisting that Libya isn't a safe port and that migrants intercepted by the Libyan coast guard are returned to detention centers where abuses are rife.

Meloni visited Lampedusa

on Sunday with Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who took a hard line cheered by Meloni's supporters.

"We will decide who comes to the European Union, and under what circumstances. Not the smugglers," Von der Leyen said as she laid out a 10-point plan that included a pledge of support to prevent departures of smuggling boats by establishing "operational partnerships on anti-smuggling" with countries of origins and transit.

The plan envisages a possible "working arrangement between Tunisia and Frontex," the EU border force with air and sea assets that currently assists search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, and a coordinating task force within Europol.

The Commission hasn't ruled out the possibility that a naval blockade is under consideration. "We have expressed the support to explore these possibilities" raised by Italy, Commission spokeswoman Anitta Hipper said Monday.

Under the deal von der Leyen signed with Tunisia, the EU pledged to provide funds for equipment, training and technical support "to further improve the management of Tunisia's borders." For example, the funds are helping to pay for the refurbishment of 17 vessels belonging to Tunisian authorities.

The latest influx is challenging unity within the EU, its member states and also in Meloni's far-right-led government, especially with European elections looming. Some member countries have objected to the way von der Leyen pushed the Tunisia plan through and complain that they were not properly consulted.

Dominican Republic's president stands resolute on his closing of all borders with Haiti

By MARTÍN ADAMES AL-
CÁNTARA
Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — The president of the Domini-



Dominican Republic security forces stand guard on a border bridge between Dajabón, Dominican Republic, and Haiti, Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023.

Associated Press

can Republic on Sunday defended his decision to close air, sea and land traffic with neighboring Haiti in their dispute over construction of a canal targeting a river that runs through both countries.

President Luis Abinader said in a televised speech that the border closures begun Friday will remain in place until construction is halted on the canal, which seeks to use water from the Massacre River to alleviate a drought in Haiti's Mariboroux plain.

"We do not desire or seek confrontation, but we are confronting the uncontrollable people who keep

Haiti insecure, and who, due to their private interests, now also conspire against the stability of their government and the security of our water resources," Abinader said during his brief speech, referring to gang violence that has engulfed Haiti.

Accusing Haiti of violating a 1929 treaty between both countries, he said that the Massacre River is a key resource for Dominican farmers and that construction could damage the environment, including a wetland.

"The precedent of an irrigation project built unilaterally can lead to an escalation

of constructions that would destroy the river," Abinader said.

The river is named after a bloody battle between French and Spanish colonizers, and it was the site of a mass killing of Haitians by the Dominican army in 1937.

The full border shutdowns came four days after Abinader announced that his administration had stopped issuing visas to Haitians and had closed the border near the northern town of Dajabon.

He said it was important to raise awareness in the international community so it comes to Haiti's aid.

Food culture in Aruba

(Oranjestad) - Like many other cultures, an important aspect of the Aruban cultural identity is our connection to food and food traditions. The local food traditions consist of a melting pot of different cultural and religious eating habits and dishes.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner

The routine of breakfast, lunch and dinner on the island is one that does not completely follow a European or American routine, despite the major influences from these parts of the world on our culture and way of living. When it comes to the three important meals of the day, most of the Aruban population follows a Latin-American influenced routine.

Breakfast

Breakfast in Aruba is quite simple: a cup of coffee or tea, some bread, and sometimes an egg. Some-

times, due to the need of a quick “to-go” breakfast, you may also find many snack trucks and cafes that sell sandwiches, pastechis (meat pie), arepas and empanadas early in the morning.

Main Meal

The main meal is typically eaten in most households around noon or in the afternoon. This can consist of meat, fish, and chicken—stewed or fried—with funchi (polenta) or rice with stewed vegetables. Often, fried or boiled plantain or pan bati (Aruban pancake) is included. Stews are a staple in Aruban cuisine and can be largely influenced by Latin-American and Latin/Afro-Caribbean Stews. Some of the more unique stews and soups from the ABC Islands* include sopi di bonchi cora (red kidney bean soup with pig tail), sopi mondongo (tripe soup), carni stoba (beef stew),



comcomber stoba (West Indian gherkin stew) and much more.

Dinner Time

Dinner time can vary significantly from household to household. Unlike the U.S. or in Europe, dinner time typically does not consist of a whole (warm) meal. Instead, the evening “meal” can typically consist of something lighter, like a sandwich, though it is not uncommon to see leftovers from the main meal reheated and eaten again. Tea and coffee are often also served with the evening snack.

(Religious) Holidays

Christmas is probably the biggest global holiday, and every culture has its own spin on what their Christmas cuisine entails. In Aruba, our Christmas cuisine is again largely based on Latin-American influences, most notably from Venezuela. Ayacas and the famous pan di ham* are two crucial holiday dishes, along with stuffed turkey, roasted glazed ham topped with pineapples, arroz con pollo (rice and chicken) and potato salad, among other items. Traditional drinks include ponche crema (Aruban eggnog), chuculati pinda (hot chocolate with peanut butter), and homemade fruit punch. Desserts include, bolo di pistachio (pis-

tachio cake), bolo di cashupete (cashew cake), quesoillo (flan), bolo preto (dark fruit cake), drigidek (gingerbread), pan boyo (bread cake) and more.

Snacks and tasty delights

Besides meals and dishes that are eaten on the dinner table, Aruba also has a food tradition that includes snacks and other tasty delights that you may easily find around the island. These include, Saco*, basket, pastechi, kroket, deditos, Johnny cake and more. These snacks are usually sold at local snack trucks and cafes, often located on the side of the road. In the area of Tanki Leendert and Tanki flip, for example, there are many of these trucks parked on the side of the road and often open until late at night—offering tasty and filling snacks post night-life fun.

***ABC Islands: Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao**

***Pan di ham: Derived from the Venezuelan Pan de Jamon (rolled up bread with ham, raisins and olives)**

***Saco: Saco literally means “bag”. Saco contains fried potatoes, plantains, chicken (and ribs) and a Johnny cake, served in a paper bag.**

Source: Voeding, voedingsgewoonten en gerechten op Aruba (Nutrition, Food Traditions and Dishes on Aruba) by Biblioteca Nacional Aruba



Over a decade in business, Aruba Living Today: Offering the so much needed human touch



NOORD — We are in 2023. It was a wild ride with Covid-19 and we all are aiming for a change of routine. We simply want to “live” life again. “It is time for living your dream,” as the quote says at Aruba Living Today’s office. “We are fifteen plus years in business, and I am proud to say that all our clients stuck with us. We are no part of a big company, we keep it small, personal, and real. Because you are not a number, no sales target either and certainly your name is not commission. Our responsibility is to make your dream come true,” says owner Randolph Arends.

From human to human

If you have decided to buy a house or rent one for vacation in Aruba and you are looking for that match, the question now is how to click with a person that offers a personal touch? One who pays genuine attention and has sincere interest in what you want?

This different approach to real estate is what sets Aruba Living Today apart, and the reason Randolph calls himself a property mediator instead of a real estate broker. “The personal touch is essential to me. I am stepping aside of the image that real estate brokers are only in for the commission. This image does not fit me at all, I am in for my passion, and I can only do this from the heart.”

One stop shopping point

Services offered by Aruba Living Today are House and Land Sales, Rentals, Investments, Property Management, Vacation Rental, Mortgages, Insurances, Maintenance, Assist in Arrangements for Notary and Utilities, Guiding Bureaucracy Process and Assisting in Import of Furniture. Randolph and his business partner Eladio Max Maduro. Born in Aruba, he was raised in the Netherlands. Max was Corporal mandatory in the Dutch Army/Genie der Landmacht. He also studied financial administration in the Netherlands, and has a degree in Dutch insurance law. Max has 40 years work experience in all kind of insurance, specialized liability and pension law. In the past, he worked for local and international insurance brokers companies.

As per March 1st 2023, he is working as a commercial partner at Aruba Living Today.

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Aruba Living Today is featured on House Hunters, social media, Aruba Living Today and of course in Aruba Today’s newspaper. □

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National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place

below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna,

geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird



drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003.

In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas. □



Episode 53: The Qudi, an Aruban native heritage



Qudi must be an old native name for our island's native grinding stones, since in Papiamentu it is called "Piedra di mula" (Pie` di mula) grinding stone. However the word Qudi also means a depression or hole in a hard rock surface or bolder that can hold rain water for a longer time, which is till the next rain fall.

Qudi as waterholes, small sink holes in the flat lime stone floor where coral meets the rocky island and where little springs sometimes occurs. Now the Qudi as a native Aruban milling stone is a symbol of sedentary survival that goes back thousands of years. One of Aruba's native heritage symbols. Ancestral milling stone or Qudi accompanied by its prefect shaped pestle or manga.

Both stones finally will shape each other. The Qudi's are usually made out of granite rock of the island's batholite formation. But for the manga you must go to the north coast where the rooi dry river bed meets the beach to pick a rounded stone to fit the shape of the depression of the grinding stone. Primary commodity, the preferred material to be transformed in to Aruba's unique milling stones. A lithic testimony of local Agro- poters. Was it a Caquetian heritage or else?

The Qudi's basic mechanical purpose is to grind and to polish. Using its surface as anvil and the manga stone as the pestle (primarily) maize was ground into flour. Corn flour a symbol of spiritual transformation embraced in the mystery of life, death and rebirth. Qudi's were traditionally pass over to the eldest aunt or sister as keeper matriarch in line and guardian of the stone, it seems that Qudi's, Mortar's or Metate's held a strong meaning for human life, death and the hope for a rebirth or transformation of some kind for many cultures all over.

Typically a large stones with a smooth depression or bowl worn into the upper surface is enough. The bowl is formed whether by weather or by the continual and long-term grinding of materials by using a smooth hand-held manga, stone (aka : mano) for a proficient method of turning grains into flour. The laborious action consists of a horizontal grinding motion that differs from the vertical crushing motion used in a mortar and pestle. Deeper metate bowls indicate

either a longer period of use or greater degree of activity. In traditional Amerindian culture, quid's were typically used by women who would grind maize and other organic materials during food preparation. Making a sort of tortillas, cachapa or pan bati bread. Beyond grinding cereals, seeds and legumes, Qudi's where used to elaborate healing potions, grinding clay, milling fish bones, extract natural dye of vegetation and minerals and in the elaboration of ropes, an unimaginable ways of usage and applications. Sad is the unfathomable loss Island cultural heritage has suffers through illegal export to foreign collector's during the late 70's.

Little considered artifacts by many archaeologists, seen as simply as a common everyday tools, therefore overlooked their symbolic significance. However a methodological approach will reveal how central it was for a native existence. The ancient manufacturers and users of these grinding stones could be of older heritage. Acknowledge the tremendous impact it had on the traditional islander physical and sustainable welfare. It is of vital importance to catalog family owners, stories and origins of the Qudis left, tracing generations trough the life cycle of all of those whose life depended of these iconic artifacts, From production (Born)to discard (dead) from the modern society. That is why it is responsible that these stones which were so fundamental to Aruba's pre-Hispanic agriculturalists and corn-based cuisines culture be preserved and banned as export material. Qudi y su manga, grinding stone and its pestle have continued to sustain life-not just literally, in terms of food and culture. To find a nature made Qudi you could once go walk about and find a carved stone left and even one carved by the old ones. The Qudi represents one of the most unusual and complex traditions of pre Columbian artifacts. They come in many different forms, and morphological variation corresponds to different regions or quarries. They can be circular, rectangular, flat, or curved. They may or may not have rims. Some show signs of use-wear while others show over use where a hole appeared to be grinded out of bottom, making it useless in a way. Some examples where later also made out of limestone or coral and used as a fresh water filter.

Source; Island Insight by Etnia Nativa

Visit the island's popular cave sites!

(Oranjestad)—Among the endless sea of dark brown sand and cacti, there are two caves hidden in the outskirts of San Nicolas, in the north-eastern area of the island. These caves, The Quadiriki cave and The Fontein Cave are open to visitors of the Arikok National Park, so if you ever decide to take an “off-road” tour in the park, be sure to visit these prehistoric caves...and be sure to bring a flashlight!

Quadirikiri Cave

Known for its two chambers accompanied by a skylight, the Quadikiri Cave is the most popular cave among locals and tourists, as it is easy to walk through and provides great lighting for pictures.

As with all prehistoric or ancient sites, there is always a folk legend that adds to the lore and mystery of the site. The Quadiriki cave is no different. The most well-known legend behind the cave could be considered as Aruba's first love story, as it tells the tale of the undying love between the chief's daughter and her beloved. As legend would have it, the chief disapproved of his daughter's choice of lover, as he thought him unworthy. Stubborn and filled with anger, the daughter refused to turn away her beloved.

So, the chief decided to lock her up in the Quadirikiri Cave, in hopes that she would soon calm down and turn away her lover. Her beloved, in turn, was



locked away in the Tunnel of Love (Now known as the Huliba Cave).

Through the pathways underneath the Tunnel of Love running up to the Quadiriki cave, the two love birds found each other, and refused to let each other go. Because of their stubbornness, they both died in the Quadiriki Cave, their ascending spirits burning two holes in the ceiling of the cave. This is why the cave has two holes through which sunlight passes through to illuminate the chamber.

Though there have been discoveries of Amerindian drawing on the wall, these have mostly been ruined by vandalism. However, the Fontein Cave further up north, provides a better glimpse in prehistoric Amerindian paintings.

Fontein Cave

Longer than the Quadirikiri Cave, the Fontein Cave contains pathways that stretch to the limestone walls further down. Here is also where prehistoric drawings can be seen. Though this cave does not have its own legend, this



was speculated to have been occupied—or at least used by prehistoric Arawak settlers on the island for rituals and other spiritual ceremonies.

The Huliba Cave/ Tunnel of Love

The Huliba Cave, formerly known as the Tunnel of Love, was once open to the public, and was the biggest and most accessible of all three caves. This cave had five chambers, including one that is heart-shaped. This cave had narrow stairs that led to long pathways deep into the cave, with a staircase leading to the exit on the other side. In one of the chambers, there used to be the carving of the Virgin Mary, put there for the protection of the cave.

However, the Huliba Cave has been permanently closed for a few years now, as a way to preserve the bat population that lives in the cave. These Long Tongue Fruit Bats and Insect Eater Bats are very important to the ecosystem of the island. Though this cave is no longer accessible to the public, it surely is interesting to learn more about the history of these caves and the Awarak tribes that resided or utilized them.

Do note that these caves are very dark, humid, hot, and are inhabited by bats. Do wear comfortable clothing and shoes, as the pathways in these caves may be rough and bumpy, and don't forget to bring a flashlight! □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 43 Real brat

1 Pill type

7 Life

stories, for short

11 St. Francis's home

12 Take apart

13 Quick to take offense

15 Supermarket section

16 Low card

18 Automaker

Benz

21 Satyr's kin

22 Furniture layer

24 Tattoo setting

25 Sleep spot

26 Like many Pride

Parade participants

27 Poet Frost

29 Job for Holmes

30 Fare carrier

31 Sudden shock

32 Misbehave

34 Slow on the uptake

40 Dispatched

41 Glacial period

42 Sacred chests

DOWN

1 Purr

2 Fire remnant

3 Letter before omega

4 Ornamental tree

5 School paper

6 Polynesian idol

7 Legendary Paul

8 Travel stop

9 Keats work

10 Lawn material

14 Annoyed

16 Deck of fortunes

I	V	O	R	Y		S	O	F	I	A
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P	A	R	I	S			O	M	E	N

Yesterday's answer

17 Cuban dance

19 Majestic

20 Minimum amount

21 Way off

22 Old soldier

23 Reuben base

25 Wall unit

28 Forces, as payment

29 Whirlybird

31 Breakfast quaff

33 Ninny

34 Airport screening org.

35 That lass

36 Quill need

37 Roofing goo

38 Freud topic

39 German article

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10
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40					41					
42					43					

9-19

A X Y D I B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-19

CRYPTOQUOTE

W F Z O F N Z C M Z F W Q M C C P L Z

S U Z O O S H K G P U Y V Z C Z V I

R H V W X S L V Z — N W P V S K S N W O

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: SEPTEMBER TRIES ITS BEST TO HAVE US FORGET SUMMER. — BERNARD WILLIAMS

Why retirees may want to buy an immediate annuity now

By LIZ WESTON
of NerdWallet

An immediate annuity is an insurance product that provides guaranteed income: You give an insurer a chunk of money, and the company gives you a stream of payments that can last for life. The payments begin within 12 months of purchase.

Now may be a good time for retirees to buy an immediate annuity, since payouts are the highest they've been in a decade, says Rob Williams, managing director of wealth management at Charles Schwab.

But buying an immediate annuity also known as an income annuity or a fixed immediate annuity is effectively irreversible, so you'll want to choose carefully.

WHY YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER AN IMMEDIATE ANNUITY

One of the big risks in retirement is outliving your savings. Having enough guaranteed income to cover basic expenses can give you assurance that you'll keep a roof over your head and food in the fridge, no matter what.

A major source of guaranteed income is Social Security, and some people still have traditional pensions. If you don't have enough guaranteed income to cover essential living costs, though, an immediate annuity could fill in the gap, says Wade Pfau, author of "Retirement Planning Guidebook." But immediate annuities shouldn't be an "all or nothing" solution, Pfau says. Ideally, you also would have money invested in stocks for growth, as

well as cash reserves for emergencies.

Immediate annuities can help you ride out down markets, Williams notes. The steady stream of income could help you avoid selling investments to meet living expenses, he says.

HOW MUCH YOU CAN GET FROM AN IMMEDIATE ANNUITY

There are many types of annuities, and some are mind-bendingly complex. By contrast, immediate annuities are relatively straightforward: Your payout depends largely on how much you invest, your age, prevailing interest rates and the payout option you choose.

For example, a man and woman age 65 who invest \$100,000 can expect a monthly check of about \$535 if they choose the joint life option, where the payment continues for both lifetimes, according to Charles Schwab's an-



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com. Associated Press

nity income estimator. If they choose a cash refund option, the monthly check drops to about \$532, but their heirs will receive any money left over if the couple dies before getting back their original investment.

That's a relatively cheap form of insurance and could provide some reassurance to people who worry the insurance company will "win" if they die early, Williams says.

Payouts also depend on the insurer. According to the online marketplace ImmediateAnnuities.com, monthly checks for the couple could range from \$513 to \$565 a month for the joint life option, depending on the company. Some companies sell annuities with cost-of-living adjustments in each subsequent year, but initial payouts are much smaller. For our hypothetical couple, a 3% annual inflation adjustment would result in payouts ranging from \$359 to \$379 to start, according to ImmediateAnnuities.com. Inflation protection may be unnecessary if retirees have Social Security, which is inflation-adjusted, and investments in stocks, which deliver inflation-beating returns over time, Pfau says. □

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The strike by auto workers is entering its 4th day with no signs that a breakthrough is near

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Business Writer

The auto workers' strike against Detroit's Big Three went into its fourth day with no signs of an early breakthrough and against the threat that the walkout could soon spread.

A spokesman for General Motors said that representatives of the company and the United Auto Workers were continuing to negotiate on Monday.

So far the strike is limited to about 13,000 workers at three factories one each at GM, Ford and Stellantis. GM warned, however, that 2,000 UAW-represented workers at an assembly plant in Kansas City are "expected to be idled as soon as early this week" because of a shortage of supplies from a GM plant near St. Louis, where workers walked off the job Friday.

Workers at the Kansas City plant build the Chevrolet Malibu and Cadillac XT4. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said she is hoping for a quick resolution, and that it is too soon to gauge the impact of the strike.

"It's premature to be making forecasts about what it means for the economy. It would depend on how long the strike lasts and who would be affected by



United Auto Workers members walk a picket line during a strike at the Ford Motor Company Michigan Assembly Plant in Wayne, Mich., Friday, Sept. 15, 2023.

Associated Press

it," she said on CNBC.

Yellen said labor activism this year strikes by Hollywood writers and actors, by workers at about 150 Starbucks locations and walkouts that were narrowly averted at United Parcel Service and West Coast ports has been driven by a strong labor market and high demand for workers. In a sign of the potential economic and political of a long strike, President Joe Biden is sending two top administration officials to Detroit this week to meet with both sides. Biden has sided with the UAW in brief public comments, saying that the automakers have not fairly shared their re-

cord profits with workers.

An administration official said Monday that acting Labor Secretary Julie Su and senior aide Gene Sperling will not serve as mediators they won't be at the bargaining table but are going to Detroit "to help support the negotia-

tions in any way the parties feel is constructive." The official was not authorized to discuss private discussions and spoke anonymously. UAW President Shawn Fain said Monday that the Biden administration won't broker a deal.

"This is our battle. Our members are out there manning the picket lines," Fain said on MSNBC. "This battle is not about the president, it's not about the former president."

The UAW is seeking wage increases of 36% over four years, while the companies have offered about 20%. The union is also demanding a 32-hour work week for 40 hours of pay, and other changes. □

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Kim Petras surprise releases previously shelved debut album 'Problematique,' featuring Paris Hilton

By **MARIA SHERMAN**
AP Music Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kim Petras fans, the wait is over. The Grammy-award winning German popstar has surprise released her previously shelved and partially leaked debut album, "Problematique."

Across 10 tracks inspired by French house music released Monday, Petras' makes a bold reclamation of her artistic autonomy: from the funk-y "Born Again," to the smooth retro-pop of "Dirty Things" and the playfully materialistic "All She Wants," which features "Stars Are Blind" singer Paris Hilton.

"It was shocking when I found out part of the album leaked at the time that it wasn't ever going to come out, especially as I poured so much of myself into it. I was heartbroken but, at the same time, it was really exciting to see my fans listening to the tracks and loving them," Petras said in a statement to The Associated Press.

"Now that I'm able to put them out, it's just so freeing to have more music that I love out in the world and officially share them in a way that all my fans can hear them."



Kim Petras performs on NBC's "Today" show at Rockefeller Plaza on Friday, June 23, 2023, in New York.

That opinion is shared by Hilton. "Recording 'All She Wants' at Kim's house was so much fun," she said in a statement. "The song is all about being unapologetically fabulous, a sentiment both Kim and I live by." The road to "Problematique" has been a difficult one. In 2021, Petras signed with major label Republic Records and announced the album then scheduled to be her full-length debut but it was eventually

scrapped and leaked. It was a disappointing turn of events for Petras and her fans, who had long awaited her first album. It wasn't until June that she released what would become her actual debut, the flirty, Eurodance-pop "Feed the Beast."

That arrived 15 years after the launch of her career and followed a few history-making events: This year, Petras became the first openly trans artist to

win in a major category at the Grammy Awards for her playfully sacrilegious collaboration with Sam Smith, "Unholy," in the best pop duo/group performance category. The same song, re-released as a bonus track on "Feed the Beast," went No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, making her the first trans artist ever occupy the top spot.

Releasing "Problematique" now, in some ways, is a way to keep her fans on their

toes and a way of taking something that was stolen from her and packaging it in a way that feels true.

"I don't ever want to be predictable or repeat myself, and it reminds me of when I was an independent artist and able to put things out on my own schedule and keep people guessing," she said. "I just hope everyone loves the new music as much as I do." The album was released due to fan demand and in advance of her "Feed the Beast" world tour, which kicks off on Sept. 27 in Austin, Texas, and concludes in Milan on March 5. Petras says fans can expect to hear some of their favorite tracks from across her vast discography.

"When I was thinking of opening night, it popped into my head that I wanted to add some of the songs from 'Problematique' on the set list. My Feed the Beast Tour is about all these different sides of me from my 'Clarity' project, to my 'Slut Pop' EP, and my 'Turn Off the Light' mixtape so why not include 'Problematique' if people are already somewhat familiar with it?"

"And then I thought, why not just release the album," she said. □

Associated Press

Bill Maher postpones return to the air, the latest TV host to balk at working during writers strike



Bill Maher arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party in Beverly Hills, Calif., on March 27, 2022.

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Bill Maher has delayed returning to his HBO talk show during

the ongoing strike by writers and actors, a decision that follows similar pauses over the weekend by "The Drew Barrymore Show,"

Associated Press

"The Talk" and "The Jennifer Hudson Show."

Maher last week said he would bring his show back into production, but on Monday said he'll wait because talks are scheduled to begin between producers and writers on Wednesday.

"My decision to return to work was made when it seemed nothing was happening and there was no end in sight to this strike," Maher said via social media. "Now that both sides have agreed to go back to the negotiating table I'm going to delay the return of 'Real Time,' for now, and

hope they can finally get this done."

Barrymore, who drew criticism for taping new episodes of her daytime talk show despite the ongoing writers and actors strikes, said Sunday she'll wait until the labor issues are resolved.

"I have listened to everyone, and I am making the decision to pause the show's premiere until the strike is over," Barrymore posted on Instagram on Sunday. "I have no words to express my deepest apologies to anyone I have hurt and, of course, to our incredible team who works

on the show and has made it what it is today."

Talk shows are covered under a separate labor contract — the so-called Network Code — from the one actors and writers are striking. The Network Code also covers reality TV, sports, morning news shows, soap operas and game shows. Barrymore's initial decision to return to the air Monday — without her three union writers and with picketers outside her studio — was met with pushback on social media. Her show resumed taping in New York last week and was picketed by striking writers. □

Mike Babcock resigns as Blue Jackets coach amid investigation involving players' photos

By **STEPHEN WHYNO**
AP Hockey Writer

Mike Babcock, the coach with a Stanley Cup championship and two Olympic gold medals on his resume, has lost his last two jobs in the NHL.

Last time, it was for losing too many games. This time, it was for his interactions with players that followed a disturbing pattern of past behavior.

Babcock resigned as coach of the Columbus Blue Jackets on Sunday after just two months on the job, less than a week after his requests for personal photos from players in a bonding effort drew criticism as too invasive.

The team announced Babcock's abrupt departure in the aftermath of an investigation by the NHL Players' Association into his conduct. Pascal Vincent was named Babcock's replacement and signed a two-year contract through the 2024-25 season.

"Our players deserve to be treated with respect in the workplace," NHLPA executive director Marty Walsh said. "Unfortunately, that was not the case in Columbus. The club's decision to move forward with a new head coach is the appropriate course of action."



Then-Toronto Maple Leafs coach Mike Babcock speaks to reporters, April 25, 2019, in Toronto.
Associated Press

Former NHL player Paul Bissonnette reported on his podcast Tuesday that Babcock was asking players to show him photos and projecting them for others to see in an invasion of privacy. Babcock and captain Boone Jenner denied the report, saying it was just a way of the new coach getting to know players.

Still, the players union launched a review and updated the league Friday on its findings.

"This was a difficult deci-

sion on everyone's part, but one we felt necessary to ensure our focus remains on the players and the team's upcoming season," general manager Jarmo Kekalainen said in a statement. "On behalf of the entire Blue Jackets organization, we want to thank Mike for his hard work and the professionalism he has shown in working together on a plan to step down." Babcock's conduct was under the microscope given his history of polar-

izing, old-school coaching techniques, many of which came to light after he was fired by Toronto in 2019. This was his first NHL job since. "Upon reflection, it has become clear that continuing as head coach of the Columbus Blue Jackets was going to be too much of a distraction," Babcock said. "While I'm disappointed to not have had the opportunity to continue the work we've begun, I know it's in the best interest of the organization for me to step

away at this time. I wish everyone in the organization well in the upcoming season."

Babcock, the 2008 Stanley Cup-winning coach with Detroit, said upon taking the Columbus job in July that he evolved as a coach and learned how better to deal with players following his firing by Toronto.

A report surfaced after the Maple Leafs fired Babcock that he had asked a player to share his ranking of teammates from hardest- to least-hardest working and then shared that with the rest of the group. Other former players expressed their dissatisfaction with Babcock, who at one point was considered the best coach in hockey.

Babcock was the third coach Kekalainen has hired since taking over in February 2013. The Blue Jackets have missed the playoffs each of the past three seasons.

Vincent, who turns 52 later this month, was one of the candidates for the job when Babcock got it. He was an assistant on former coach Brad Larsen's staff the previous two seasons after four years as coach of the American Hockey League's Manitoba Moose. □

Minnesota picks Taylor Heise 1st in the inaugural Professional Women's Hockey League draft



Taylor Heise, right, and tennis legend Billie Jean King pose after Heise was selected first overall by Minnesota in the inaugural Professional Women's Hockey League draft in Toronto, Monday, Sept. 18, 2023.

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP)—Minnesota selected American forward

Taylor Heise with the first pick of the inaugural Professional Women's Hockey League draft Monday. Tennis legend Billie Jean King, a member of the league's board of directors, made the announcement. The PWHL formed over the summer and is set to begin play in January with six teams. Toronto selected veteran Canadian defender Jocelyne Larocque second, and Boston took Swiss center Alina Muller third.

Muller was the only player not from the U.S. or Canada picked in the first three rounds. New York took Canadian defender Ella Shel-

ton fourth. Ottawa took American defender Savannah Harmon fifth, and Montreal continued the run on blue liners by taking Canadian national team member Erin Ambrose sixth. Minnesota with its second-round pick drafted American goaltender Nicole Hensley to add to its group led by Heise and free agent signings Kendall Coyne Schofield, Kelly Pannek and Lee Stecklein.

Heise, from Lake City, Minnesota, is coming off her fifth and final year at the University of Minnesota, where she was a first-team

all-American after leading the NCAA in goals with 30. She was second in points with 67, and tied for third in assists with 37, in 39 games for the Gophers.

The 23-year-old closed a decorated career that included winning the Patty Kazmaier Award in 2022 as the top player in NCAA Division I women's hockey. The 5-foot-9, 160-pound Heise has also starred for the U.S. national team.

Heise was named best forward and tournament MVP at the 2022 world championships, leading all players in goals with seven and points with 18. □

Royals rally with four runs in the eighth to beat the Guardians, 6-4

By **DAVE SKRETTA**

AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)

— Drew Waters hit a go-ahead double during a two-out rally in the eighth inning Monday, and the Kansas City Royals rallied to beat the Cleveland Guardians 6-4 in their series-opening matinee.

The Royals trailed 4-2 when Kyle Isbel drew a lead-off walk against Trevor Stephan. The reliever retired the next two batters before walking MJ Melendez and hitting Nelson Velázquez, loading the bases for Michael Massey, whose own walk off Stephan (6-7) scored a run to get Kansas City within one.

Cleveland brought in Enyel De Los Santos to face Waters, and his double to left gave the Royals the lead. A wild pitch from De Los Santos allowed Massey to score and give Kansas City's bullpen a cushion.

Jackson Kowar (2-0) earned the win with a scoreless inning. James McArthur handled the ninth for his first big



Kansas City Royals' Bobby Witt Jr. steals second during the third inning of a baseball game against the Cleveland Guardians Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, in Kansas City, Mo.

Associated Press

league save.

Gabriel Arias homered and drove in a pair of runs for Cleveland, which squandered another strong start by Cal Quantrill. He allowed two runs on five hits with three strikeouts and no walks in 5 2/3 innings, but

was left watching from the dugout as the Guardians wasted a chance to make him 7-0 in 10 appearances against Kansas City.

Royals starter Brady Singer continued his late-season slump. He allowed four runs on

eight hits and two walks over six innings, and the right-hander has still not won a game since August 8 in Boston.

The Guardians were coming off a three-game sweep of the AL West-contending Texas Rangers, but they are

72-79 and need to win nine of their last 11 games to avoid only their second losing season under manager Terry Francona.

Bo Naylor's double and Myles Straw's sacrifice staked Cleveland to a 2-0 lead. And after the Royals got one back in the third, Gabriel Arias homered in the fourth and added a sacrifice fly in the sixth to push the advantage to 4-1. Nelson Velázquez, who has been a rare bright spot during a dismal year in Kansas City, homered with two out in the sixth, and the game remained that way until the Royals put together their eighth-inning rally.

KEEP ON RUNNING

José Ramírez stole his 200th career base in the third inning. The five-time All-Star, whose 216th homer Sunday tied him with Carlos Santana and Hal Trosky for fifth-most in club history, became the 11th player in major league history with at least 200 steals and 200 homers through their age-30 season. □

Michigan State tells football coach Mel Tucker it will fire him for misconduct with rape survivor

By **LARRY LAGE**

AP Sports Writer

Michigan State informed suspended football coach Mel Tucker on Monday that he will be fired without compensation for misconduct involving activist and rape survivor Brenda Tracy in a sordid case that dates back more than a year.

"The notice provides Tucker with seven calendar days to respond and present reasons to me and the interim president as to why he should not be terminated for cause," athletic director Alan Haller said in a statement released by the school. If Tucker does not present "sufficient reasons to dispute" multiple contract violations, the school will fire him Sept. 26, three days after the program's Big Ten opener in what was hoped to be a bounce-back year for the Spartans. Tucker is in the third year of

a \$95 million, 10-year contract and if he is fired for cause, the school would not have to pay him what's remaining on his deal. Tucker, his agent and his attorney did not immediately return messages seeking comment.

Haller said the decision does not affect the ongoing

investigation into Tracy's allegations of sexual harassment, which is being handled by the school's office for civil rights.

Tracy said Tucker sexually harassed her during a phone call in April 2022. Several months later, Tracy filed a complaint with the school's Title IX office and

the investigation was completed in July. A hearing is scheduled for the week of Oct. 5 to determine if Tucker violated the school's sexual harassment and exploitation policy and a ruling could take up to 60 days.

Tracy's allegations were made public by USA Today earlier this month. The 51-year-old Tucker, who said he is estranged from his wife and has two children, said the allegations against him are "completely false." Tucker insisted that the intimate phone call he had with Tracy was consensual and outside the scope of both Title IX and school policy. The school, however, said the actions Tucker acknowledged were unprofessional and unethical. It told Tucker he is being fired for "breaches" in his contract and for engaging "in any conduct which constitutes moral turpitude

or which, in the university's sole judgement, would tend to bring public disrespect, contempt or ridicule upon the university."

Tracy is known for her work with college teams educating athletes about sexual violence. Michigan State paid her \$10,000 to share her story with the football team. The Spartans (2-1) were routed 41-7 by No. 8 Washington on Saturday in Harlon Barnett's debut as interim coach. Michigan State hosts Maryland (3-0) on Saturday.

Tucker began his coaching career with Nick Saban as a graduate assistant for the Spartans in 1997. He returned to the school with one of the biggest contracts in college sports after leading Colorado for one season and serving as an assistant coach at Georgia, Alabama and Ohio State. □



Michigan State coach Mel Tucker walks the sideline during the second half of an NCAA college football game against Richmond, Saturday, Sept. 9, 2023, in East Lansing, Mich. Michigan State won 45-14.

Associated Press